

# News from Ed Markey

**United States Congress**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 24, 2004**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**CONTACT: Mark Bayer**

**or Michal Freedhoff**

**(202) 225-2836**

## **MARKEY CALLS ON HOMELAND SECURITY DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE \$1.9 MILLION IN GRANTS TO MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

**Washington, DC:** Representative Edward Markey (D-MA), a senior Member of the Select Committee on Homeland Security, was joined by Senators Kennedy and Kerry and Congressmen Capuano, Frank, Lynch, McGovern, Delahunt and Tierney today in sending a letter to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Tom Ridge urging the approval of public transportation security grants applied for by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA).

“Enough chlorine to kill 100,000 people in half an hour is often contained in a single rail tanker car going right through crowded urban centers, including Boston, and we know that Al Qaeda wants to attack our trains and cities,” said Rep. Markey. “The April 14 hydrochloric acid leak from a train near Sullivan Square station just yards away from I-93 underscores the need for these funds. In comparison to the magnitude of security challenges currently facing public transit agencies like the MBTA, these are modest requests that DHS should immediately approve.”

The MBTA provides services to 175 cities and towns in Massachusetts, carrying approximately 1 million passengers per day. In developing its comprehensive security plans, the MBTA identified the following urgent needs: \$320,000 to train police personnel; \$400,000 to expand its explosive detection unit capabilities and provide all MBTA police personnel with training in the Passenger Assessment Security Screening program currently in use at municipal airports; \$750,000 to purchase riot control, surveillance, computer mapping and intelligence software and communications equipment; and \$400,000 for the purchase, installation and training associated with chemical agent detection technology. The letter sent today urges Secretary Ridge to approve these proposals.

In targeting the passenger rail system in Madrid, Spain, terrorists linked to Al Qaeda killed almost 200 people and wounded more than 1000. Press reports indicate that an Ohio-based Al Qaeda operative was arrested for plotting to collapse a bridge in New York City or derail a train in DC. Recent press reports also indicate that law enforcement authorities are investigating suspicious surveillance activity along the main rail lines

between New York and Washington, D.C., as well as the discovery of a concealed infrared electronic device on tracks near a rail yard in Philadelphia.

“The eyes of the world will be on Boston this summer. It is a densely populated city and the host of this summer’s Democratic National Convention. It will be at the top of Al Qaeda’s terrorist target list,” said Rep. Markey. “We are trying to make sure that it is on the top of the list at the Homeland Security Department as well.”

A copy of the letter to the Department of Homeland Security is available on the Web at <http://www.house.gov/markey>

###